

Easement

M -23-26

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

For NCRS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Oaks II

and/or common The Riggs Farm

2. Location

street & number 6010 Riggs Road (present address) 5815 Riggs Road not for publication

city, town Claysville Laytonsville
X vicinity of congressional district Eighth

state Maryland code 24 county Montgomery code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Montgomery County Government

street & number Montgomery County Office Building

city, town Rockville vicinity of state Maryland 20852

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Montgomery County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Rockville state Maryland 20852

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maryland Historical Sites Inventory has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

date ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

M:23-26

Condition

☒ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☒ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date _____

To be moved 8/80

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Presently situated in an open field on the southeast side of Riggs Road northeast of Claysville, The Oaks II is a 1½-story gambrel-roofed structure with an adjoining 1-story gable-roofed addition to the east. This building and three surrounding outbuildings will be moved to a nearby location by the Montgomery County Government this summer. The new site is a topographically similar 5-acre parcel of land on the northwest side of Riggs Road an eighth of a mile northwest of the present site.

The main block and the addition are both constructed of logs connected with full dove tail notching and chinked with wood chips, mud, and stone. Both sections were originally covered with simpler unadorned weatherboards. In the main section a huge exterior brick chimney with corbel capping is located on the west gambrel wall; a smaller interior brick chimney rises above the east facade. The kitchen wing displays a massive exterior stone based chimney along its east gable wall.

The main block which faces south is four bays wide with a one-story open porch spanning the front. The porch with its standing seam tin roof and porch posts appears to have replaced an earlier porch. Entrances are found in the two central bays. Windows with 6/6 sash flank these doors.

Both the door and window trim are later modifications. Three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers pierce the wood-shingled gambrel roof. The west facade is characterized by a single 6/6 sashed window to the north of the chimney. Two smaller 4/2 sashed windows flank the chimney at attic level. Molded rakeboards and shallow cornice returns further define this facade. The rear (north) facade is very plain: a doorway opposite the main facade's west entrance and a small 6/6 sashed window to the east. The steep gambrel roof is also distinguished by three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers.

The one story kitchen wing to the east is two bays wide with its primary entrance located in the western bay of the south facade. A 6/6 sashed window is found to the east. A lean-to frame addition extends across the north facade. Unadorned rakeboards outline the east gable end.

Interior

The main building's floor plan, a double parlor floor plan which features single doors on the southern facade leading into each room, is a first floor plan generally associated with Pennsylvania and northern and western counties in Maryland. The southeast parlor exhibits a very fine paneled mantel wall, complete with six-panel door which leads through a lobby to the mid-nineteenth century one-room addition. The chairrail and trim around the 6/6 windows are original. In the upper sash can be read "Sam Riggs and Buffalo Bill, Decem 1885." A modern pantry closet, which replaced a corner cupboard removed by the Letts family after 1930, has been inserted to the left of the mantel. A modern door leads into the pantry, which is now covered with thin 20th century vertical board paneling. A post 1930s mantel shelf built by Mr. Austin Geisbert now covers the original fireplace.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #1.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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The Oaks II
Montgomery County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

(DESCRIPTION, continued)

An original thin vertical board partition wall separates the two parlors. The door separating both rooms appears to be original, complete with six raised panels but later box lock. Later molding, a Victorian four-panel door on the north (rear) facade of the house and a simple mantel replacing the original have altered the character of the room, but much of the original decorative material remains. Here, the chairrail is intact, and a paneled door to a closet below the stairs reveals a number of wrought iron nails with rose heads and flat points (corroborating the pre-1814 construction date). Later but still historically significant names are scratched into the panes of the windows in the western gable and read "Ruxton Ridgely Nov. 27, 1892" and below it "Lousia Lilly Riggs Nov. 27, 1892." A small face is also etched into one pane.

A tight winder stair in the southwest corner of this parlor rises to the second floor. Here is sound one of the most unusual features of the building. A hallway runs the entire length of the southern facade, leading to a door which opens into a space between the main block and the addition. A ladder leads to the attic (here, early machine cut nails--brads, for securing the attic flooring--were located, also pointing to a very early 19th century date) and through the gable end of the building into a small sleeping quarters above the addition. The hallway is highlighted by contrasting paint colors--cream on the baseboards, door rails and styles, and darker leaf green on the remaining stair balusters and wall surfaces. Three bedrooms of equal size are found in the other side of an original vertical beaded board partition which runs the length of the hall. The first and third doors are original, but with a minor variation. Instead of the top two panels, three panes of glass forming a transom have been built in.

As with the rooms on the first floor, much of the original fabric can be found. In the northwest bedroom the chairrail and baseboards are intact. The mantel has been removed. The central bedroom retains original chairrail and baseboards, and has a window pane reading "S. Riggs Jan 11 1886." The northeast bedroom exhibits original trim, but has also had its fireplace blocked.

Outbuildings

Also on the property are several outbuildings which although of later period possess architectural and historical significance.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #2.

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PAGE 2

(DESCRIPTION, continued)

An animal shed, located about 25' northeast of the main house, is a nearly square, gable-roofed frame structure of board and batten siding. Corner posts and plates are hand cut square members. Measuring 10'6" x 14' the building appears to be used for storage.

Immediately to the east of this structure is the smokehouse. This building, measuring 14'2" x 14'2" is a board and batten structure. Its gable roof is covered with corrugated iron over its original dark green shingles. The blackened interior shows hand-hewn posts which support similar hand-hewn plates. A shelf running along the western facade appears original.

About 55' west of the animal shed is a curious building now used as a chicken coop but whose original use is unknown. This heavy post and lintel framing system, hand-hewn, suggests that this structure is perhaps the oldest of the group. The construction features include windbracing at the corners, and hand-hewn rafters roof butt-jointed and pegged. It is sheathed with board and batten siding and has a feather-edged shingle roof.

Located about 50' from The Oaks II is a bank barn measuring approximately 61' x 46' and built on a stone foundation. Its post and beam construction is sheathed by vertical boards, punctuated by many wooden ventilator panels.

The water tower, dating from the twentieth century, is built on a concrete base. It is sheathed with board and batten, and supports a pallet which holds a large cistern. This structure, it is believed, is unique in the county.

The remaining outbuildings which date from the twentieth century possess no particular architectural or historical significance: the windmill, the frame outhouse measuring 4'2" x 4'2", a frame storage building measuring 8' x 12', the frame pump house, the gambrel roofed frame barn measuring 84' x 40', the frame dairy barn measuring 30'x74', the two frame double corn cribs, a tractor and machine shed measuring 79'x 22', a chicken coop measuring 12'x20' and three hog sheds. Also of little merit is a 2½ story frame farmhouse which was moved to its present location about 50 years ago by Austin Geisbert. This simple, early twentieth century dwelling is located just east of The Oaks II.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #3.

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The Oaks II
Montgomery County
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

THE MOVING OF THE OAKS II

The Montgomery County Government recently purchased The Oaks II farm, a 550-acre tract, from the estate of John C. Letts for use as a sanitary landfill. The county, realizing both its need to find a suitable location for this facility and its responsibility to preserve the county and the state's cultural resources, has chosen this site since it appears that this location would affect the least number of known cultural resources. The obvious adverse impact on this architecturally and historically significant complex however has prompted the county government to take the following action. The historic area work permit for the construction of the landfill will be issued contingent upon several conditions. These conditions are:

1. The main building at The Oaks II farmstead and three outbuildings (the animal shed, the smokehouse, and the storage shed) will be moved intact to a new site.
2. The water tower and the pumphouse will be made available to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning for their use.
3. An archeological survey, performed by The Maryland Historical Trust, will be executed prior to construction of the landfill.
4. A positive easement on the property will be given to The Maryland Historical Trust indicating that the restoration of both the interior and the exterior of the farmhouse would occur. The easement would cover both the exterior and the interior of the farmhouse. The county will make every effort to provide funds for the restoration through either its own channels or outside support.
5. The move of the complex will be fully documented.
6. A professional contractor who specializes in moving historic buildings will be employed by the county.
7. A minimum 5-acre site will be selected for the buildings. This site, located directly across Riggs Road, is similar to the original farm of the Riggs family.

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(DESCRIPTION, continued)

8. The Historic Preservation Commission of Montgomery County will work with the Laytonsville community in attempts to establish plans for the adaptive re-use of the buildings.
9. The Oaks II complex will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to these conditions, the county will, if possible, make available to the community the buildings not approved for preservation.

While there appears to be no feasible alternative for the preservation of The Oaks II at its present site, the Montgomery County Government has made great efforts to properly relocate the complex.

The new setting and the general environment of the proposed site is topographically similar to the original site. Located not more than an eighth of a mile northwest of the present site, this parcel of land was also used as grazing fields by the previous owner of The Oaks II. More importantly, it was part of the original tract of land farmed by the Riggs family. This open field, bordered to the south by a small cluster of oak trees and to the north by an intermittent stream, perhaps more sympathetically evokes the original setting of The Oaks II. Its present site has been compromised by the intrusion of several twentieth century structures and by the loss of many of its shade trees.

In its present condition, the property's architectural integrity has also been challenged. Used as a storage shelter by its previous owner, the main building has been abandoned for many years. The three outbuildings have received minimal maintenance. While these buildings have escaped severe structural damage and have retained a surprising amount of their original fabric, they are in need of preservation attention. The county has committed themselves not only to moving but also to restoring these structures, thus saving and preserving a group of buildings of great architectural significance.

Although it is doubtful that this complex will continue to function as a farm on its new location, the county has planned for its adaptive reuse. Two alternatives include returning the property to private ownership or making it available to the neighboring town, Laytonsville, as a community center. The first proposal would not affect the integrity of the complex since it would only be returning to its original use, that of a private residence. The second suggestion would not dramatically alter the historical integrity of The Oaks II since the Riggs family has played an

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #5.

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(DESCRIPTION, continued)

active role in the civic and agricultural affairs of the community.

The Oaks II complex represents an important architectural and historical resource of the county and the state. In its effort to preserve this property, The Montgomery County Government has sought to maintain its architectural and historical integrity and reestablish its immediate setting and general environment.

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				local history

Specific dates 1794–1814

Builder/Architect

Reuben Riggs

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SIGNIFICANCE

The Oaks II, built between 1797–1814, is significant for its 133-year association with the Riggs family, a prominent Montgomery County family active in civic and agricultural affairs of both the county and the state. The house is a well-preserved, rare example for Montgomery County of a 1½-story, gambrel-roofed building of log construction. In addition, much of its original interior fabric remains intact. Although the Montgomery County government, who recently purchased the 550-acre tract for the construction of a sanitary landfill, plans to move the main house and three significant outbuildings to a nearby parcel of land, this new site is part of the original Riggs tract of land. The use of this land itself holds historical importance having been farmed continuously from the 18th century and having survived intact in Montgomery County where intensive development has been the norm since World War II. The continuous use of the property as a farm residence since the 18th century indicates that archeological deposits documenting changing artifact patterns through time should be present. The county therefore will conduct an archeological survey to insure that these resources will be fully investigated.

HISTORY

In 1797 Samuel Riggs acquired two parcels of land from Isaac and Hannah Briggs.¹ When Riggs died in 1814 he left to his son, Reuben, 222½ acres "where he now lives." An additional note in his will (probated in Montgomery County 7/15/1814) states that this land was the property Reuben's father acquired from the Briggs' on December 9, 1797. County tax records of 1804 also list Reuben Riggs owning a 222½-acre farm in this vicinity. This information suggests that the house, The Oaks II, was erected between 1797 and 1814 and probably between 1797 and 1804 by Reuben Riggs. In analyzing the building's fabric, a construction date within this time period appears plausible.

Reuben Riggs, born May 25, 1775, married in February 1805 Mary Willson Thomas also from a prominent Montgomery County family. As a prosperous gentleman farmer,² Riggs continued to expand his estate. At one time he owned 800 acres. After his death in 1829, his widow Mary and unmarried son Hezekiah remained in The Oaks II. Reuben's oldest son Samuel of R received a nearby tract of land totaling 282½ acres where he and his wife Milcah Griffith renovated The Oaks I.³ This house was probably built by Samuel of R's grandfather, Samuel. After the death of Hezekiah in 1851 The Oaks II farm was also acquired by Samuel of R.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #6.

(11/78)

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The Oaks II
Montgomery County
CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 6

(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

Samuel of R continued to purchase⁴ property, owning at one time almost 1,000 acres of rich farmland. He also pursued a political career serving as county commissioner from 1856-1861 and as delegate in the State House from 1867-1874. Under his ownership The Oaks II was no longer occupied by members of the Riggs family but tenanted by a farm manager, Henry Crockett, who supervised the extensive farm operations for Samuel of R.

Samuel of R's son, Reuben, inherited the farm after his father's death in 1882. It appears that The Oaks II continued to function as housing for the farm employees. After Rueben's death in 1910 his sons ran the farm. Samuel Haines and his family rented The Oaks II from Sam Riggs III.

After more than one hundred years of Riggs ownership the farm was sold to John C. Letts in 1930.⁵ Before this final transfer of title the family graveyard was moved to St. John's cemetery in Olney. Letts, who farmed the land to grow feed for his dairy cattle at Ayrlawn on Old Georgetown Road, continued to lease the property. Austin Geisbert, using a frame house which had been moved to the farm as his residence, converted The Oaks II into a storage shelter. The Geisberts are widely known throughout the state for their farming as well as for the accomplishments achieved by their children in 4-H and State Agricultural Competitions.

Architecturally, the house is an unusually intact survival of a very early nineteenth century log building in Montgomery County, with much of its original architectural detail intact. From a construction standpoint, the house is also important as it shows a regional variation in framing. At the doorway opening logs appear to be fitted into slotted verticle posts, but with their leading edge also fitting in front of the post. As one of two historic gambrel-roofed houses left in the county, these factors add up to make The Oaks II truly significant.

Although archeological investigations have not been conducted, the continuous utilization of this property as a farm residence since the last quarter of the eighteenth century should have produced distribution patterns of artifacts around the residence and outbuildings which will prove of value in documenting the changes in Southern Maryland's rural society since the Revolutionary War period.

¹Montgomery County Land Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland. G/161; H/82.

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Montgomery County
Maryland

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(SIGNIFICANCE, continued)

² Roger B. Farquhar, History of Montgomery County, Maryland:
Old Homes and History. Monumental Printing Co., Baltimore, Md.,
1952. p. 311.

³ Montgomery County Land Records. BS 7/283-5.

⁴ Farquhar, op.cit. p. 310

⁵ Montgomery County Land Records. 512/407.

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CONTINUATION SHEET The Oaks II
 Montgomery County
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Farquhar, Roger B., History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old
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Rockville, Maryland.

MacMaster and Hiebert, A Grateful Remembrance, Montgomery County and
Montgomery County Historical Society, 1976.

Malloy, et al, Abstracts of Wills in Montgomery County, Maryland 1776-
1825, 1977.

Riggs, Riggs Family of Maryland, 1939.

Tax Records of Montgomery County, 1804-1810, Montgomery County
Historical Society, Rockville, Maryland.

U.S. Census for Montgomery County, Maryland: 1850. 1860.

Interviews: Mrs. Cuyler Dwyer Duvall
 Mr. Austin Geisbert
 Mrs. Austin Geisbert
 Mrs. Joyce Hawkins
 Mrs. Maude Bell Riggs
 Mrs. Dorothy White Tessier

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #8.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 5 acres

Quadrangle name Sandy Spring Quadrangle

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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 Zone Easting Northing

B

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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Not Applicable

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Orlando Ridout V, Mark R. Edwards, Bridget D. Hartman, Anne Wolfe

organization Maryland Historical Trust

date March 1980

street & number 21 State Circle

telephone (301) 269-2438

city or town Annapolis

state Maryland 21401

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC The Oaks II
AND/OR COMMON The Riggs Farm

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 6010 Riggs Road

CITY, TOWN Claysville

___ VICINITY OF Laytonsville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Maryland

COUNTY Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Montgomery County Government

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER Montgomery County Office Building

CITY, TOWN Rockville

___ VICINITY OF Maryland

STATE 20852 zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Montgomery County Courthouse
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Liber #: 512

Folio #: 407

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville

STATE Maryland 20852

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

___ FEDERAL ___ STATE ___ COUNTY ___ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

M.23-26

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE*
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		to be moved 8/80

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Presently situated in an open field on the southeast side of Riggs Road northeast of Claysville, The Oaks II is a 1½-story gambrel-roofed structure with an adjoining 1-story gable-roofed addition to the east. This building and three surrounding outbuildings will be moved to a nearby location by the Montgomery County Government this summer. The new site is a topographically similar 5-acre parcel of land on the northwest side of Riggs Road an eighth of a mile northwest of the present site.

The main block and the addition are both constructed of logs connected with full dove tail notching and chinked with wood chips, mud, and stone. Both sections were originally covered with horizontal beaded weatherboard (visible on the gable wall between the main section and the kitchen wing) but are now covered with simpler unadorned weatherboards. In the main section a huge exterior brick chimney with corbel capping is located on the west gambrel wall; a smaller interior brick chimney rises above the east facade. The kitchen wing displays a massive exterior stone based chimney along its east gable wall.

The main block which faces south is four bays wide with a one-story open porch spanning the front. The porch with its standing seam tin roof and porch posts appears to have replaced an earlier porch. Entrances are found in the two central bays. Windows with 6/6 sash flank these doors. Both the door and window trim are later modifications. Three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers pierce the wood-shingled gambrel roof. The west facade is characterized by a single 6/6 sashed window to the north of the chimney. Two smaller 4/2 sashed windows flank the chimney at attic level. Molded rakeboards and shallow cornice returns further define this facade. The rear (north) facade is very plain: a doorway opposite the main facade's west entrance and a small 6/6 sashed window to the east. The steep gambrel roof is also distinguished by three shallow pedimented gable-roofed dormers.

The 1-story kitchen wing to the east is two bays wide with its primary entrance located in the western bay of the south facade. A 6/6 sashed window is found to the east. A lean-to frame addition extends across the north facade. Unadorned rakeboards outline the east gable end.

Interior

The main building's floor plan, a double parlor floor plan which features single doors on the southern facade leading into each room, is a first floor plan generally associated with Pennsylvania and northern and western counties of Maryland. The southeast parlor exhibits a very fine paneled mantel wall, complete with six-panel door which leads through a lobby to the mid-nineteenth century one-room addition. The chairrail and trim around the 6/6 windows are original. In the upper sash can be read "Sam Riggs and Buffalo Bill, Decem 1885." A modern pantry closet, which replaced a corner cupboard removed by the Letts family after 1930, has been inserted to the left of the mantel. A modern door leads into the

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Item #7
Description
continued p.1

pantry, which is now covered with thin twentieth century vertical board paneling. A post 1930s mantel shelf built by Mr. Austin Geisbert now covers the original fireplace.

An original thin vertical board partition wall separates the two parlors. The door separating both rooms appears to be original, complete with six raised panels but later box lock. Later molding, a Victorian four-panel door on the north (rear) facade of the house and a simple mantel replacing the original have altered the character of the room, but much of the original decorative material remains. Here, the chairrail is intact, and a paneled door to a closet below the stairs reveals a number of wrought iron nails with rose heads and flat points (corroborating the pre-1814 construction date). Later but still historically significant names are scratched into the panes of the windows in the western gable and read "Ruxton Ridgely Nov. 27, 1892" and below it "Lousia Lilly Riggs Nov. 27 1892." A small face is also etched into one pane.

A tight winder stair in the southwest corner of this parlor rises to the second floor. Here is found one of the most unusual features of the building. A hallway runs the entire length of the southern facade, leading to a door which opens into a space between the main block and the addition. A ladder leads to the attic (here, early machine cut nails--brads, for securing the attic flooring-- were located, also pointing to a very early nineteenth century date) and through the gable end of the building into a small sleeping quarters above the addition. The hallway is highlighted by contrasting paint colors - cream on the baseboards, door rails and styles, and darker leaf green on the remaining stair balusters and wall surfaces. Three bedrooms of equal size are found in the other side of an original vertical beaded board partition which runs the length of the hall. The first and third doors are original, but with a minor variation. Instead of the top two panels, three panes of glass forming a transom have been built in.

As with the rooms on the first floor, much of the original fabric can be found. In the northwest bedroom, the chairrail and baseboards are intact. The mantel has been removed. The central bedroom retains original chairrail and baseboards, and has a window pane reading "S. Riggs Jan 11 1886." The northeast bedroom exhibits original trim, but has also had its fireplace blocked.

Outbuildings

Also on the property are several outbuildings which although of later period possess architectural and historical significance.

An animal shed, located about 25' northeast of the main house, is a nearly square, gable-roofed frame structure of board and batten siding. Corner posts and plates are hand cut square members. Measuring 10'6" x 14' the building appears to be used for storage.

Item #7
Description
continued p.2

Immediately to the east of this structure is the smokehouse. This building, measuring 14'2" x 14'2" is a board and batten structure. Its gable roof is covered with corrugated iron over its original dark green shingles. The blackened interior shows hand-hewn posts which support similar hand-hewn plates. A shelf running along the western facade appears original.

About 35' west of the animal shed is a curious building now used as a chicken coop but whose original use is unknown. This heavy post and lintel framing system, hand-hewn, suggests that this structure is perhaps the oldest of the group. The construction features include windbracing at the corners, and hand-hewn rafters roof butt-jointed and pegged. It is sheathed with board and batten siding and has a feather-edged shingle roof.

Located about 50' from The Oaks II is a bank barn measuring approximately 61' x 46' and built on a stone foundation. Its post and beam construction is sheathed by vertical boards, punctuated by many wooden ventilator panels.

The water tower, dating from the twentieth century, is built on a concrete base. It is sheathed with board and batten, and supports a pallet which holds a large cistern. This structure, it is believed, is unique in the county.

The remaining outbuildings which date from the twentieth century possess no particular architectural or historical significance : the windmill, the frame outhouse measuring 4'2 x 4'2", a frame storage building measuring 8' x 12', the frame pump house, the gambrel roofed frame barn measuring 84' x 40', the frame dairy barn measuring 30' x 74', the two frame double corn cribs, a tractor and machine shed measuring 79' x 22', a chicken coop measuring 12' x 20' and three hog sheds. Also of little merit is a 2½ story frame farmhouse which was moved to its present location about 50 years ago by Austin Geisbert. This simple, early twentieth century dwelling is located just east of The Oaks II.

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) local history		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1797-1814

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Reuben Riggs

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Oaks II, built between 1797-1814, is significant for its 133-year association with the Riggs family, a prominent Montgomery County family, active in civic and agricultural affairs of both the county and the state. The house is a well-preserved, rare example for Montgomery County of a 1½ story, gambrel-roofed building of log construction. In addition, much of its original interior fabric remains intact. Although the Montgomery County government, who recently purchased the 550-acre tract for the construction of a sanitary landfill, plans to move the main house and three significant outbuildings to a nearby parcel of land, this new site is part of the original Riggs tract of land. The use of this land itself holds historical importance having been farmed continuously from the eighteenth century and having survived intact in Montgomery County where intensive development has been the norm since World War II. The continuous use of this property as a farm residence since the eighteenth century indicates that archeological deposits documenting changing artifact patterns through time should be present. The county therefore will conduct an archeological survey to insure that these resources will be fully investigated.

In 1797, Samuel Riggs acquired two parcels of land from Isaac and Hannah Briggs.¹ When Riggs died in 1814 he left to his son, Reuben, 222½ acres "where he now lives." An additional note in his will (probated in Montgomery County 7/15/1814) states that this land was the property Reuben's father acquired from the Briggs' on December 9, 1797. County tax records of 1804 also list Reuben Riggs owning a 222½-acre farm in this vicinity. This information suggests that the house, The Oaks II, was erected between 1797 and 1814 and probably between 1797 and 1804 by Reuben Riggs. In analyzing the building's fabric, a construction date within this time period appears plausible.

Reuben Riggs, born May 25, 1775, married in February 1805 Mary Willson Thomas also from a prominent Montgomery County family. As a prosperous gentleman farmer,² Riggs continued to expand his estate. At one time he owned 800 acres.² After his death in 1829, his widow Mary and unmarried son Hezekiah remained at The Oaks II. Reuben's oldest son Samuel of R received a nearby tract of land totaling 282½ acres where he and his wife Milcah Griffith renovated The Oaks I.³ This house was probably built by Samuel of R's grandfather, Samuel. After the death of Hezekiah in 1851 The Oaks II farm was also acquired by Samuel of R.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

Item #8

Statement of Significance

continued p.1

Samuel of R continued to purchase property, owning at one time almost 1,000 acres of rich farmland.⁴ He also pursued a political career, serving as county commissioner from 1856-1861 and as delegate in the State House from 1867-1874. Under his ownership The Oaks II was no longer occupied by members of the Riggs family but tenanted by a farm manager, Henry Crockett, who supervised the extensive farm operations for Samuel of R.

Samuel of R's son, Reuben, inherited the farm after his father's death in 1882. It appears that The Oaks II continued to function as housing for the farm employees. After Reuben's death in 1910 his sons ran the farm. Samuel Haines and his family rented The Oaks II from Sam Riggs III.

After more than one hundred years of Riggs ownership the farm was sold to John C. Letts in 1930.⁵ Before this final transfer of title the family graveyard was moved to St. John's cemetery in Olney. Letts, who farmed the land to grow feed for his dairy cattle at Ayrlawn on Old Georgetown Road, continued to lease the property. Austin Geisbert, using a frame house which had been moved to the farm as his residence, converted The Oaks II into a storage shelter. The Geisberts are widely known throughout the state for their farming as well as for the accomplishments achieved by their children in 4-H and State Agricultural Competitions.

Architecturally, the house is an unusually intact survival of a very early nineteenth century log building in Montgomery County, with much of its original architectural detail intact. From a construction standpoint, the house is also important as it shows a regional variation in framing. At the doorway opening logs appear to be fitted into slotted vertical posts, but with their leading edge also fitting in front of the post. As one of two historic gambrel-roofed houses left in the county, these factors add up to make The Oaks II truly significant.

Although archeological investigations have not been conducted, the continuous utilization of this property as a farm residence since the last quarter of the eighteenth century should have produced distribution patterns of artifacts around the residence and outbuildings which will prove of value in documenting the changes in Southern Maryland's rural society since the Revolutionary War period.

Footnotes

¹Montgomery County Land Records, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland. G/161; H/82.

²Roger B. Farquhar, History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old Homes and History. Monumental Printing Co., Baltimore, Md., 1952. p. 311.

³Montgomery County Land Records. BS 7/283-5.

⁴Farquhar, op. cit. p. 310.

⁵Montgomery County Land Records. 512/407.

Item #9
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Boyd, History of Montgomery County, 1879.

Dames and Moore Engineering, Landfill site selection report, 1977.

Farquhar, Roger B., History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old Homes and History (Monumental Printing Co., Baltimore, 1952.

Land Records of Montgomery County, Montgomery County Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland.

MacMaster and Hiebert, A Grateful Remembrance, Montgomery County and Montgomery County Historical Society, 1976.

Malloy, et al, Abstracts of Wills in Montgomery County, Maryland 1776-1825, 1977.

Riggs, Riggs Family of Maryland, 1939.

Tax Records of Montgomery County, 1804-1810, Montgomery County Historical Society, Rockville, Maryland.

U.S. Census for Montgomery County, Maryland: 1850. 1860.

Interviews: Mrs. Cuyler Dwyer Duvall
Mr. Austin Geisbert
Mrs. Austin Geisbert
Mrs. Joyce Hawkins
Mrs. Maude Bell Riggs
Mrs. Dorothy White Tessier

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see separate sheet

M:23-26

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY

5 acres

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Orlando Ridout V, Mark R. Edwards, Bridget D. Hartman, Anne Wolf

ORGANIZATION

Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

301/269-2438

STREET & NUMBER

21 State Circle

TELEPHONE

3/80

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 267-1438

The Moving of The Oaks II

The Montgomery County Government recently purchased The Oaks II farm, a 550-acre tract, from the estate of John C. Letts for use as a sanitary landfill. The county, realizing both its need to find a suitable location for this facility and its responsibility to preserve the county and the state's cultural resources, has chosen this site since it appears that this location would affect the least number of known cultural resources. The obvious adverse impact on this architecturally and historically significant complex however has prompted the county government to take the following action. The historic area work permit for the construction of the landfill will be issued contingent upon several conditons.

1. The main building at The Oaks II farmstead and three outbuildings (the animal shed, the smokehouse, and the storage shed) will be moved intact to a new site.
2. The water tower and the pumphouse will be made available to Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning for their use.
3. An archeological survey, performed by The Maryland Historical Trust, will be executed prior to construction of the landfill.
4. A positive easement on the property will be given to The Maryland Historical Trust indicating that the restoration of both the interior and the exterior of the farmhouse would occur. The easement would cover both the exterior and the interior of the farmhouse. The county will make every effort to provide funds for the restoration through either its own channels or outside support.
5. The move of the complex will be fully documented.
6. A professional contractor who specializes in moving historic buildings will be employed by the county.
7. A minimum 5-acre site will be selected for the buildings. This site, located directly across Riggs Road, is similar to the original Oaks II site topographically and is part of the original farm of the Riggs family.
8. The Historic Preservation Commission of Montgomery County will work with the Laytonsville community in attempts to establish plans for the adaptive re-use of the buildings.
9. The Oaks II complex will be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

In addition to these conditions, the county will if possible make available to the community the buildings not approved for preservation.

The Moving of The Oaks II
continued p.2

While there appears to be no feasible alternative for the preservation of The Oaks II at its present site, the Montgomery County Government has made great efforts to properly relocate the complex.

The new setting and the general environment of the proposed site is topographically similar to the original site. Located not more than an eighth of a mile northwest of the present site, this parcel of land was also used as grazing fields by the previous owner of The Oaks II. More importantly, it was part of the original tract of land farmed by the Riggs family. This open field, bordered to the south by a small cluster of oak trees and to the north by an intermittent stream, perhaps more sympathetically evokes the original setting of The Oaks II. Its present site has been compromised by the intrusion of several twentieth century structures and by the loss of many of its shade trees.

In its present condition, the property's architectural integrity has also been challenged. Used as a storage shelter by its previous owner, the main building has been abandoned for many years. The three outbuildings have received minimal maintenance. While these buildings have escaped severe structural damage and have retained a surprising amount of their original fabric, they are in need of preservation attention. The county has committed themselves not only to moving but also to restoring these structures, thus saving and preserving a group of buildings of great architectural significance.

Although it is doubtful that this complex will continue to function as a farm on its new location, the county has planned for its adaptive reuse. Two alternatives include returning the property to private ownership or making it available to the neighboring town, Laytonsville, as a community center. The first proposal would not affect the integrity of the complex since it would only be returning to its original use, that of a private residence. The second suggestion would not dramatically alter the historical integrity of The Oaks II since the Riggs family has played an active role in the civic and agricultural affairs of the community.

The Oaks II complex represents an important architectural and historical resource of the county and the state. In its effort to preserve this property, the Montgomery County Government has sought to maintain its architectural and historical integrity and reestablish its immediate setting and general environment.

ACHS SUMMARY FORM

1. Name The Oaks II (Riggs House)
2. Planning Area/Site Number 23/26 3. MNCPPC Atlas Reference Map 8
L-12
4. Address 6010 Riggs Road, Claysville
5. Classification Summary
- Category building
Ownership public
Public Acquisition _____
Status unoccupied
Accessible no
Present use agriculture; other, storage
Previous Survey Recording M-MCPC Federal _____ State X County X Local _____
(Title and date: Inventory of Historical Sites - 1976)
6. Date 1800-1814 7. Original Owner Reuben Riggs
8. Apparent Condition
- a. fair c. original site
b. unaltered
9. Description: Facing southwest along a farm lane, the Oaks II is built of logs covered with weatherboards, and has a steep gambrel roof. It has a four bay facade; the two center bays are doorways, and the two end bays have six over six windows. Three slightly projecting dormers on the front roof have six over six sash and pediment type heads. A one-story open porch spans the front. Huge fireplace chimneys are on both exterior end walls. A smaller clapboarded log kitchen wing with an external stone base chimney is attached on the east end of house. The floor pattern for both floors is three rooms in a row. A circular corner stairway leads upstairs to a fairly wide front hall (with dormer windows) connecting the bedrooms.
10. Significance: The Oaks II is important architecturally for its gambrel roof, its unusual upper hallway, and its dormer windows; and historically for its early construction date, and its associations with the Riggs family--prominent in County civic and agricultural affairs. The Oaks II was built by Reuben Riggs between 1800 and 1814 on land his father Samuel had purchased in 1796 from Isaac and Hannah Briggs. When Reuben died in 1829, his wife Mary received the Oaks II and 282 $\frac{1}{2}$ acres, which their son Samuel eventually acquired in 1853. Samuel by 1860 owned 1,000 acres, and had a farm manager living in the Oaks. Samuel served as a County commissioner from 1856-1861 and in the State House of Delegates from 1867-1874. The Riggs farm was sold out of the family in 1930 to John C. Letts, who leased it to Austin Geisbert. Geisbert lives at the farm, and uses Oaks II for storage. The County government purchased the farm for possible use as a landfill in 1977.
- Date researched and researcher 2/79 - Anne Wolf Candy Reed
Architectural Description
12. Compiler Gail Rothrock 13. Date Compiled 2/79 14. Designation
Approval _____
15. Acreage 250 acres

Easement
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

M: 23/26

MAGI:

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC The Oaks II

AND/OR COMMON Riggs House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 6010 Riggs Road

CITY, TOWN Claysville ☒ VICINITY OF Laytonsville 6 CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE Maryland COUNTY Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Storage

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Montgomery County Telephone #: 279-1000

STREET & NUMBER County Office Bldg., 100 Maryland Avenue

CITY, TOWN Rockville ☐ VICINITY OF STATE, zip code Maryland 20850

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Registry of Deeds, ETC. Montgomery County Courthouse Liber #: 512 Folio #: 407

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE M-NCPPC Inventory of Historical Sites

DATE 1976 ☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☒ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Park Historian's Office

CITY, TOWN Rockville STATE Maryland 20855

7 DESCRIPTION

M:23-26

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

There are 2 houses on this site.

I. The Oaks II faces southwest along a farm lane leading to Riggs Road..

This is a very interesting structure; it is presently being used for storage on this farm. It faces south with a four-bay facade, the two center bays being occupied by doorways. Six over six windows compose the end bays. The structure is built of logs and covered with weatherboards. The roof is a steep, gambrel roof--something extremely rare for Montgomery County. There are three dormers on the front roof that project slightly. These have six over six sash, and pediment-type heads. A one-story, open porch spans the front. Huge brick fireplace chimneys on both exterior end walls. A smaller kitchen wing, also of clapboarded logs, is attached to the east end of the house. This features an external stone base chimney.

There are some additional interesting features. First, three dormer windows are also on the back roof, so that each of the upstairs bedrooms has a dormer window to the northeast. The logs are visible by the attic stairwell at the point where the kitchen was added.

The basic house pattern for each floor is three rooms in a row. On the ground floor, there are two front doors and a back door, so that each of the rooms is accessible from outdoors. The Lettses removed the large mantel in the third room and closed off the other fireplaces. They also took out a corner cupboard next to that mantel and installed a pantry instead. A circular corner stairway in the kitchen addition was behind that cupboard, and the pantry occupies its space. Perhaps as a result of that change, the floor above the old cupboard slants noticeably. Otherwise, the floors and ceilings seem quite sturdy, although the paint and plaster are deteriorating.

There is a circular corner stairway in the first room. It leads upstairs to a fairly wide front hall (with dormer windows) connecting the bedrooms. At the opposite end of the upstairs hall is the door leading to the attic stairs and to the area above the kitchen. At present the only way to get from the kitchen to the room above it is to enter by the stairway at the opposite end of the house.

The house is presently used by the Geisberts to store not only their own possessions but also some old furniture and assorted items left from other farmers decades ago.

The significance of The Oaks II to Montgomery County architecture is pointed out by some comments in a history of the county, A Grateful Remembrance:

The typical 'plantation house' of eighteenth-century Montgomery County was...a low, one or two-room cabin with a sharply pitched roof extended to cover a narrow porch. Children or slaves slept in the loft, climbing to their room on a ladder. The planter might add a summer kitchen or an ell for storage. The log house was covered sometimes by plank; less frequently, it was a brick or stone structure...Montgomery County's surviving eighteenth-century farmhouses are almost all of this type. Tax assessments made such dwellings the universal rule.

(Continued on Attachment Sheet A)

The Oaks II

Tax assessments combined with the vagaries of the tobacco market kept much of Montgomery County too impoverished or cautious to build homes comparable to the estates on the Eastern Shore or in Southern Maryland. Consequently the touches of style and individualism incorporated into The Oaks II make it even more remarkable than its size. While the log and clapboard construction and the kitchen addition are typical of the times, the gambrel roof, the unique upper hall, and the dormer windows make this a singular home surprisingly well preserved.

II. The newer, main farm house was hauled to its present location about 50 years ago, pulled across the field by a single horse.

This simple, L-plan, two and a half story, frame house faces east on Riggs Road, and is located south of The Oaks II.

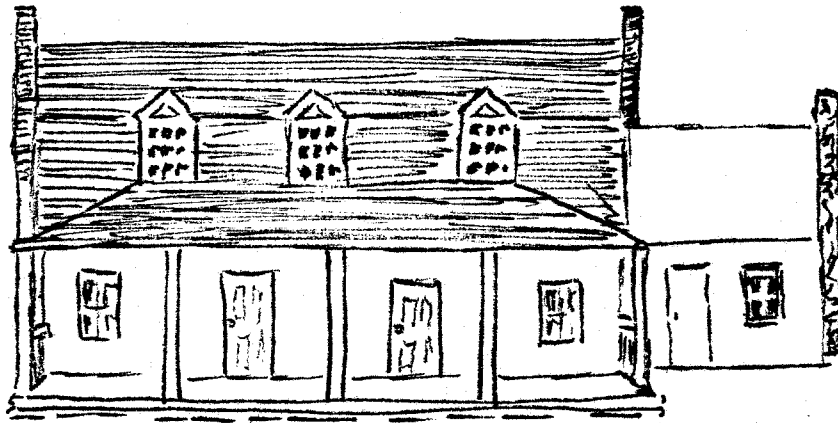
Built on stone foundations, it has white aluminum siding. Across the east elevation, and level with the ground is a field-stone porch. The east door has six wooden panels and is surmounted by a one light transom. Windows throughout the house are six over six double hung and are flanked by black metal louvered shutters. On the south elevation there is a two story, three-sided, bay window composed of one over one double hung windows. On the south side of the bay there is a pair of one over one windows.

The house has a cross gable roof which is covered by raised seam metal. The cornice line is returned at the gable ends. There are two interior stove chimneys and one exterior end chimney on the south elevation. A shed roofed, one story frame addition has been erected on the northwest corner of the north elevation.

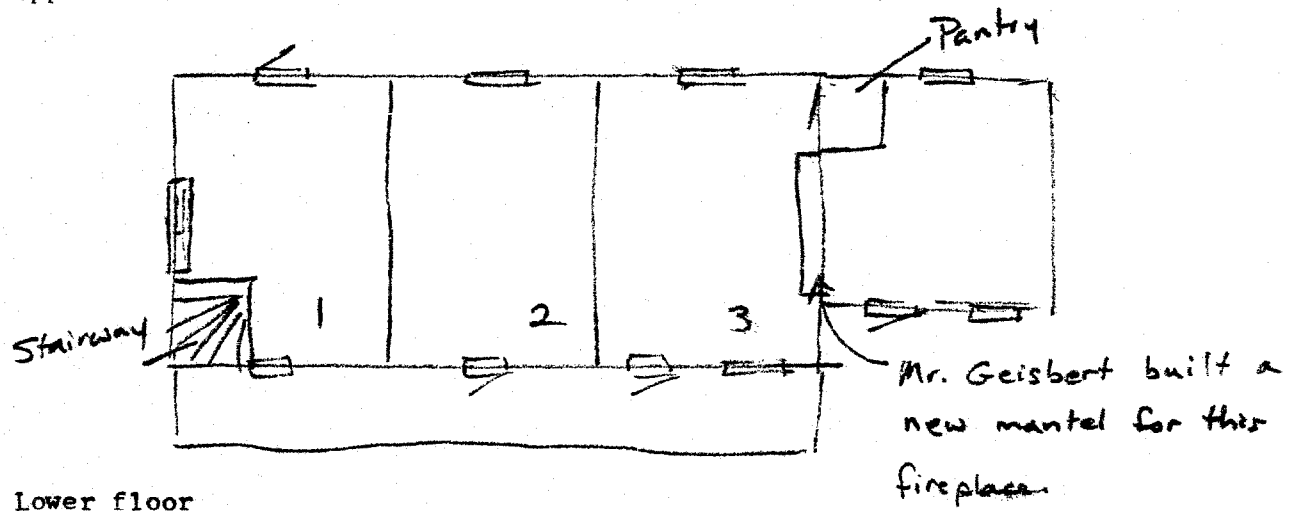
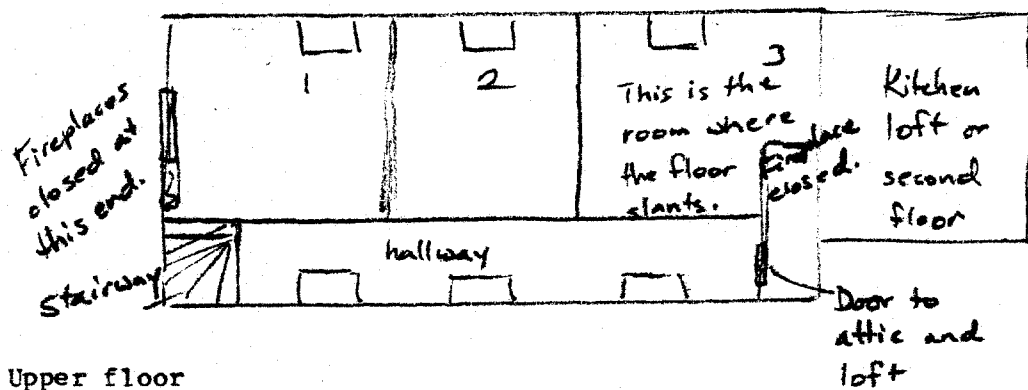
The house is set in the midst of a stand of oaks. Northwest of the house is a barn with board and batten siding and a gable roof with flanking shed roofs covered by corrugated metal. Southwest of the house is a square shed with board and batten exterior walls and a gable roof covered by raised seam metal roofing.

The Oaks II

These are obviously sketches from memory, not scale drawings at all. However, they make the text a little easier to understand.



The Oaks II as seen from the lane leading to the Geisberts' farm. Chimneys are visible at both ends and at the end of the kitchen addition.



PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Local History	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1800-1814

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Reuben Riggs

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to its architectural significance, The Oaks II is also important for its associations with a prominent Montgomery County family, the Riggses--active in civic and agricultural affairs.

The land on which Reuben Riggs built The Oaks II was originally part of the huge Addition to Brooke Grove tract resurveyed for James Brooke in 1762. Vacancies between tracts and portions of the larger tracts often acquired names of their own, so that by the time the Riggs Farm was assembled, the tracts named were Addition to Brooke Grove, Fair Hill, Resurvey of Brooke Park, Ridgeley's Ridge, and Sure Bind, Sure Find.

The land remained in the Brooke family almost until the end of the eighteenth century. In the division of land owned by Thomas Brooke, the land in question was laid off for Roger Brooke. There were several Brookes by that name, but the one mentioned was probably Roger Brooke IV, whose daughter Hannah married Isaac Briggs in 1794.¹

Isaac Briggs, an accomplished engineer and scientific farmer, is said to have arrived in Montgomery County in 1794 with his father, Samuel Briggs. The two men built "Sharon" -- a log and frame house -- on Roger Brooke's land in 1794-5. Hannah Brooke Briggs bought a house and land from her father in 1795, apparently the "Sharon" house, where they lived until Isaac Briggs died in 1830.² Thus, although Isaac and Hannah owned the property on which The Oaks II is built, there is little likelihood that they would have had the time, need, or inclination to build a house during the time they owned that land. On the other hand, had a house the size of The Oaks II been there, "Sharon" would have been unnecessary.

The Briggses sold the land in question to Samuel Riggs in two separate sales in March, 1796, and December, 1797.³ His will, processed June 15, 1814, lists his wife, Amelia (Dorsey), as deceased and names six surviving sons -- Thomas, Reuben, George Washington, Romulus, Remus, and Elisha -- and three daughters -- Polly Griffith, Henrietta Gaither, and Julia Riggs. In that will, Reuben Riggs was left 222½ acres "where he now lives" and had presumably built The Oaks II, with the note that this is the land acquired from Isaac and Hannah Briggs on December 8, 1797.

Reuben, son of Sam and Amelia, was born May 25, 1775. He married Mary Willson Thomas of a local family in February, 1805. The county tax records for 1804 list Reuben Riggs as owning 222½ acres, the same amount of land his father left him with the note that it was "where he now lives." Reuben and Mary Riggs had seven children. Their two sons were Samuel and Hezekiah. One daughter, Everline, died as an infant. Four other daughters -- Jane, Elizabeth, Julia, and Mary -- married local farmers.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY (Continued on Attachment Sheet C)

The Oaks II

When Reuben Riggs died in 1829, only one of his seven children had reached adulthood. Accordingly, he left directions that the land should be divided when Samuel, the older son, was 21 years old. At that point Samuel and Mary, the widow, were to select two or more respectable neighbors to divide the land fairly.

This they did. Five years later, Samuel and Mary chose two of Reuben's brothers, Thomas and Remus, as well as a local farmer, Ephraim Gaither.

Samuel received Lot 1, which would seem to be the wooded area north and west of the present Riggs Road, bordering on the golf course. He had 188 $\frac{1}{4}$ acres of land which his grandfather had gotten from Roger Brooke. Mary received Lot 2, a tract of 282 $\frac{1}{4}$ acres including the land purchased from the Briggses. This is the land bordering the Laytonsville-Olney Road, now Route 108, and is the land which included The Oaks II.

This division was recorded in court August 5, 1835.⁴ By that time two of the daughters and Samuel Riggs of R had married. Samuel reconditioned The Oaks I house for himself and his new bride.

Mary apparently lived in The Oaks II with the single children. By 1841, all the children except Hezekiah had married. Lot 2 is mentioned in an 1845 indenture,⁵ in which Hezekiah declared himself in debt to Samuel for \$1,000, promising to repay the loan in two years, and offering Lot 2 as security.

The 1850 census listed household 173 (probably The Oaks II) as Mary W. Riggs, 62, and Hezekiah Riggs, 32, farmer, and value of \$2,240 for the property. Household 174 is Samuel Riggs of R with a wife, six children, and a value of \$3,500.

Samuel Riggs of R acquired Lot 2 in 1853. His brother Hezekiah had died unmarried and intestate in 1851. Hezekiah's heirs were Samuel and the four married sisters, and in 1853 Samuel petitioned the court for a settlement of the estate. In the settlement the value of the property was assessed at \$5,786.12 $\frac{1}{2}$. Samuel, as eldest son, elected to take the land and pay off his sisters' shares in cash.

The Oaks II

By the time of the 1860 census, Mary Riggs was not living at Oaks II. She would have been 72, and she had married daughters nearby. Possibly, Henry Crockett lived in the house as farm manager. Crockett was from a family in the Laytonsville-Damascus area, and is listed for household 440 as 74 years old and a farm manager, living with wife Mary. Three blacks are listed in this household -- Thomas Lea, 61, farm hand, Ann King, 34 cook, and John King, a four-year-old.

Samuel Riggs of R, his wife, and seven children are listed as household 441. Reuben, 20 years old, is also called a farm manager. Samuel Riggs had acquired almost a thousand acres of farm land and was politically active, serving as a County Commissioner from 1856-61 and in the State House of Delegates from 1867-74. It would have taken an experienced manager and hand in addition to his own three teenaged boys to run the farm, as well as a cook for the fourteen of them plus hired hands as needed. It is probable that The Oaks II passed from a phase as "Grandma's house" to a phase as the headquarters for Riggs employees after Mary Riggs moved out. She died in 1874.

Samuel Riggs of R, died in 1882, and the property passed to his son Reuben. Reuben, born in 1839, married first Martha Hughes Canby and after her death, Emma Jones. His children were Samuel III, Benjamin, Lula, and William Canby Riggs. After Reuben's death on August 1, 1910, his sons ran the farm. At this point the acreage amounted to 316.589 acres; in addition to the land mentioned before, land had been acquired from William Bogley⁷ (about 28 acres) and from John Benson⁸ (about 3 acres). Samuel Haines and his family rented the farm from Sam Riggs III for several years. Mr. Haines had previously been a hand for a farmer named Best on Route 27 near the Baptist church, but eventually he eloped with the farmer's daughter. The Haineses had five children -- Laura, Bruce, Simon, Ruth (Mrs. Ernest Hawkins), and Merle -- and they were active in the church and school life of Claysville and Laytonsville. Later they bought their own place on Goshen Road just west of Laytonsville.

In preparation for the sale of the property, William C. Riggs moved family graves and stones from a burying ground on the property to St. John's cemetery in Olney.

The Riggs farm was sold to John C. Letts in 1930,⁹ and rented out since that time. When John C. Letts took over the farm, he used it to grow feed for his dairy cattle at Ayrlawn Farm on Old Georgetown Road. Austin Geisbert had worked for Letts at the other farm, and he and his family leased and settled at the Riggs farm, using the frame house which had been moved to the Oaks II area as their home and using Oaks II for storage.

The Geisberts have lived on the Letts farm for 41 years and are widely known across the state for their farming as well as for the accomplishments achieved by their children in 4-H and state agricultural competitions.

The Montgomery County Government recently purchased the farm from the estate of John C. Letts for possible use as a landfill.

(Continued on Attachment Sheet E)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Attachment Sheet E

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATAACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 250 Acres**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION****LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Anne Wolf

Candy Reed

Architectural Description - Oak II

ORGANIZATION

Sugarloaf Regional Trails

DATE

February 1979

STREET & NUMBER

Box 87

TELEPHONE

926-4510

CITY OR TOWN

Dickerson

STATE

Maryland 20753

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: ~~Maryland Historical Trust~~
~~The Shaw House, 21 State Circle~~
~~Annapolis, Maryland 21401~~
~~(301) 267-1438~~

The Oaks II

FOOTNOTES:

1. Farquhar, Roger B., History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old Homes and History, (Monumental Printing Company, Baltimore, 1952), p. 292.
2. Ibid.
3. Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland, G/161; H/82.
4. Ibid., BS7/283-5. (Includes Map)
5. Ibid., STS1/197.
6. Ibid., JGH5/514.
7. Ibid., 332/138.
8. Ibid., JA46/430.
9. Ibid., 512/407.

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- Malloy, et al, Abstracts of Wills in Montgomery County, Maryland 1776-1825, 1977.
- MacMaster and Hiebert, A Grateful Remembrance, Montgomery County and Montgomery County Historical Society, 1976.
- Boyd, History of Montgomery County, 1879.
- Land Records of Montgomery County, Maryland.
- Landfill site selection report, Dames and Moore Engineering, 1977.
- Farquhar, Roger B., History of Montgomery County, Maryland: Old Homes and History (Monumental Printing Co., Baltimore, 1952).
- Riggs, Riggs Family of Maryland, 1939.
- Tax Records of Montgomery County, 1804-1810, Montgomery County Historical Society.
- U.S. Census for Montgomery County, Maryland; 1850, 1860.
- Interviews: Mrs. Cuyler Dwyer Duvall
Mr. Austin Geisbert (interviewed by another Sugarloaf Regional Trails volunteer)
Mrs. Austin Geisbert
Mrs. Joyce Hawkins
Mrs. Maude Bell Riggs
Mrs. Dorothy White Tessier

Easement

1605325304

M#23-26

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

1 NAME

HISTORIC

The Oaks II/Riggs House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Riggs Road, North of Rte. 108

CITY, TOWN

Laytonsville (Claysville) VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Montgomery

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

☐ DISTRICT
☒ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC
☒ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED
☒ UNOCCUPIED
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☐ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☒ NO

PRESENT USE

☒ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

J.C. Letts heirs (Geisbert family-

Telephone #:

STREET & NUMBER

tenants)

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Montgomery County Courthouse

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Rockville

STATE

Maryland

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

M:23-26

7 DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

☒ EXCELLENT
☒ GOOD
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED
☐ RUINS
☐ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☒ UNALTERED
☐ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE
☐ MOVED

DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This is a very interesting structure, that is presently being used for storage on the farm here. It faces south with a four-bay facade, the two center bays being occupied by doorways. 6/6 windows compose the end bays. The structure is built of logs and covered with weatherboards. The roof is a steep, gambrel roof-something extremely rare for Montgomery County. There are three dormers on the front roof that project slightly. These have 6/6 sash, and pediment-type heads. A one-story, open porch spans the front. Huge brick fireplace chimneys on both exterior end walls. A smaller kitchen wing, also of clapboarded logs, is attached to the east end of the house. This features an external stone base chimney.

M:23-26

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This house is extremely rare for Montgomery County and possesses a number of superior architectural details. It is one of the most notable buildings in the entire County.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1) Farquhar, R.B. OLD HOMES & HISTORY OF MONT. CO., (1962), pp. 311-312.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Michael F. Dwyer, Senior Park Historian

ORGANIZATION

M-NCPPC

DATE

1976

STREET & NUMBER

8787 Georgia Ave.

TELEPHONE

589-1480

CITY OR TOWN

Silver Spring

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Agent of the National Park Seminary of Forest
Gl

This old farm and interesting house, so full of interest to one of Maryland's most eminent families, was purchased a few years ago by Mr. Ray A. Roberts, and he is using it in connection with his adjoining dairy farm.

Other sons of Samuel, Jr., II, and Laura Howard Riggs, who are living, are Laurie Howard Riggs, a prominent attorney-at-law of Baltimore, and Douglass Howard Riggs, a lifelong resident and successful farmer of Montgomery County.

The photograph taken recently shows the old

original part of the house with details indicating construction before 1800.

To the rear of the dining room is a kitchen with a large stone fireplace, and behind that in a rear wing is an outside kitchen with fireplaces six feet wide and five feet high with crane.

In this older part of the house, plain six-paneled doors and small sash with hand-made glass are typical of houses known to have been built at the time of the Revolution. On the second floor are three bedrooms in this part. There are still four doors in the house which have locks with the brass stamps showing the Lion and Unicorn of the British Empire.

The Oaks II

REBUBEN RIGGS I, born May 25, 1775, at Pleasant Hill, was a son of Samuel and Amelia Dorsey Riggs, and is believed to have built the quaint little house shown above. The house stands on the grant of 7,906 acres made to James Brooke in 1762, and named, "Addition to Brooke Grove." It was probably built about the time he married May Willson Thomas in 1805. His wife was born March 29, 1788. She was a daughter of Major Hezekiah Thomas and Jane White Thomas of Montgomery County.

Reuben inherited some land from his father, Samuel, bought acreage himself, and became a prosperous farmer on very good Montgomery County farm land. He owned at one time 800 acres in his plantation. He died in 1829. The Oaks I was on his land. He lived most of his life in the house shown above. He preferred it.

Samuel Riggs of R. was 20 years of age when he married Mileah W. Griffith, April 24, 1813, and it is believed that he lived at Oaks II before they established themselves at The Oaks I. The old house at Oaks I was reconditioned for the bride and groom. (For the detailed story of Samuel Riggs of R. see The Oaks I.)

In 1912-14 this picturesque house with about 270 acres of rich farm land which had been owned by the Riggs family for at least a century and a half was sold to Mr. John C. Letts for use as a dairy farm. Mr. Letts was founder of The S. Letts Grocery Company, later known as The



NO. 19 D-8 REUBEN RIGGS LOGS CA. 1805

Safeway Stores, which moved its executive offices from Washington to California.

The neat little house shown does not look much like a log cabin, built a century and a half ago, but such is its history. An examination reveals many primitive features. The wing to the right, with the huge rough chimney, had a wide fireplace inside, a front and rear door, and pine floors, worn down and cracked.

The left-hand front door leads into a dining room which has a fireplace and rear door. Stairs are in the extreme left-hand room, which lead to two rooms upstairs. The three dormer windows on both front and rear roofs are real antiques.

On a pane of glass in one of the rooms is to be plainly seen, "Sam Riggs, 1885."

The bright attractive appearance of the house

F. D. Magruder, B. Aug. 1, 1815, D. 6-24-1864. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labor and their works do follow them."

It is reliably stated that Fletcher Magruder's third venture into the sea of matrimony, not long before his death, was only a short time after the death of his second spouse. This time he married Martha Lumsden, who out-lived him a dozen years. One of the distant Magruder cousins was a pallbearer at Martha (Lumsden) Magruder's funeral about 1912, and followed her remains on a long railroad journey to Georgetown to lay them beside her husband buried there.

About 1898 the old plantation which then con-

tained about 200 acres of land was sold by the heirs of Fletcher Magruder to Jacob Oland of Frederick County who brought a large family to Montgomery. Oland was an excellent farmer, and his sons are among the best in the county of their adoption. The father died in 1920, and the sons carried on the home place for the mother.

In 1938 Mrs. Oland sold the farm to Malcolm H. White, of Washington, who is the present owner. She moved into a pleasant new bungalow on the highway near Sunshine. Mr. and Mrs. White left the old stone mansion intact with its memories and built a handsome Colonial type brick house on an elevation above the old house. It has extensive views.

Rolling Ridge

THE unusually picturesque house shown here is located in the western edge of the town of Laytonsville. The type of four-chimney house, very rare in Montgomery County, is quite common in the tidewater area of Maryland. It was built about 1790 by Robert Ober, a prosperous merchant of Georgetown.

Ober was of English descent and married Catharine Tenney, a daughter of Dr. Samuel Tenney, Surgeon General in the Revolutionary War. They had both come from New England and settled on the farm until it passed to the Warfield family. Ober was known to have been an influential and loyal supporter of the United States in the War of 1812.

A daughter of Robert and Catharine was Martha J. Ober, born November, 1809. In 1829 she married Elisha Riggs Griffith who was born in June, 1805. Martha O. Griffith died in 1833, and Elisha Griffith married Elizabeth Gaither who was a daughter of Frederick and Jane (Gartrell) Gaither. A daughter of this last-named couple, Maria G. Gaither, born in 1838, was married in 1860 to Israel Griffith Warfield.

During the Civil War, as Israel G. Warfield, Sr., was needed on the farm, he was allowed to purchase a substitute in the Army, which he did for \$750.

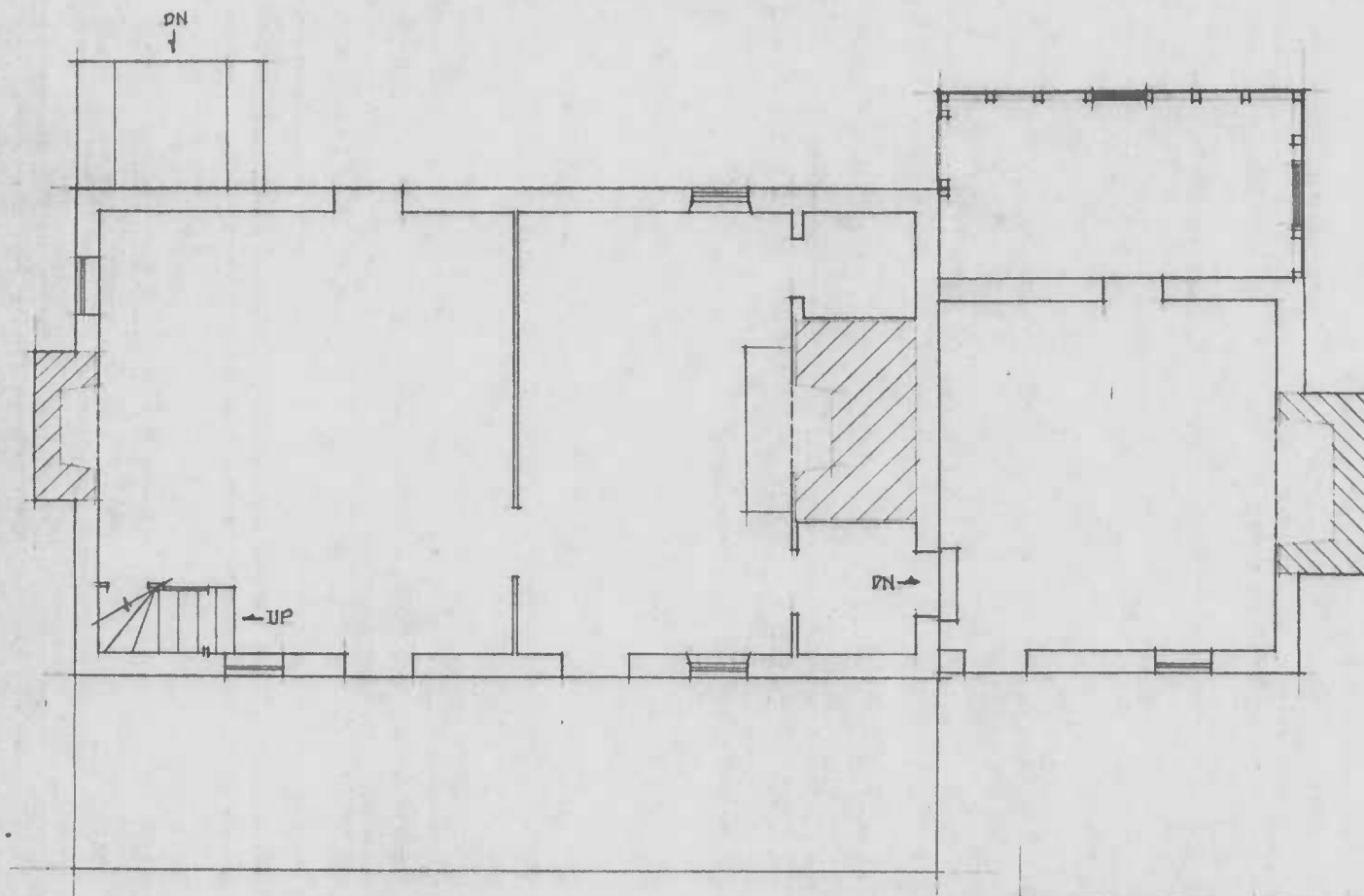
When Israel G. Warfield was four years old his father, Robert Warfield of Howard County,

bought Rolling Ridge Farm in 1836 and moved to Montgomery County. In due time Israel Warfield inherited the farm. Israel and Maria Warfield had nine children. One daughter, Lena, became the wife of Dr. V. H. Dyson who was a life-long resident of the neighborhood and a revered physician. They lived in a home on the farm within the edge of the village of Laytonsville. Another daughter, Elizabeth, married F. C. Webb of Washington. She died in September, 1942.

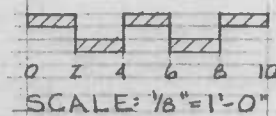
One of the four sons died before maturity. When the three remaining became of age, their father called them together and announced: "Now that you are grown it is time for you to go out and make your own way in the world. This farm of 250 acres cannot properly support such a large family."

Robert C. Warfield, the oldest, went to Baltimore, learned dentistry, and practiced that profession for forty-seven years in Rockville from 1889 to 1936. Another son, Israel Griffith Warfield, Jr., practiced dentistry for many years in Gaithersburg and died a number of years ago. The third son, Elisha G. Warfield, living at the age of 84, is a retired paint manufacturer in New Jersey.

An interesting incident involves Elisha G. Warfield, the only one living of this large family to tell the tale, which he heard from the lips of



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



ORLANDO RIDOUT V

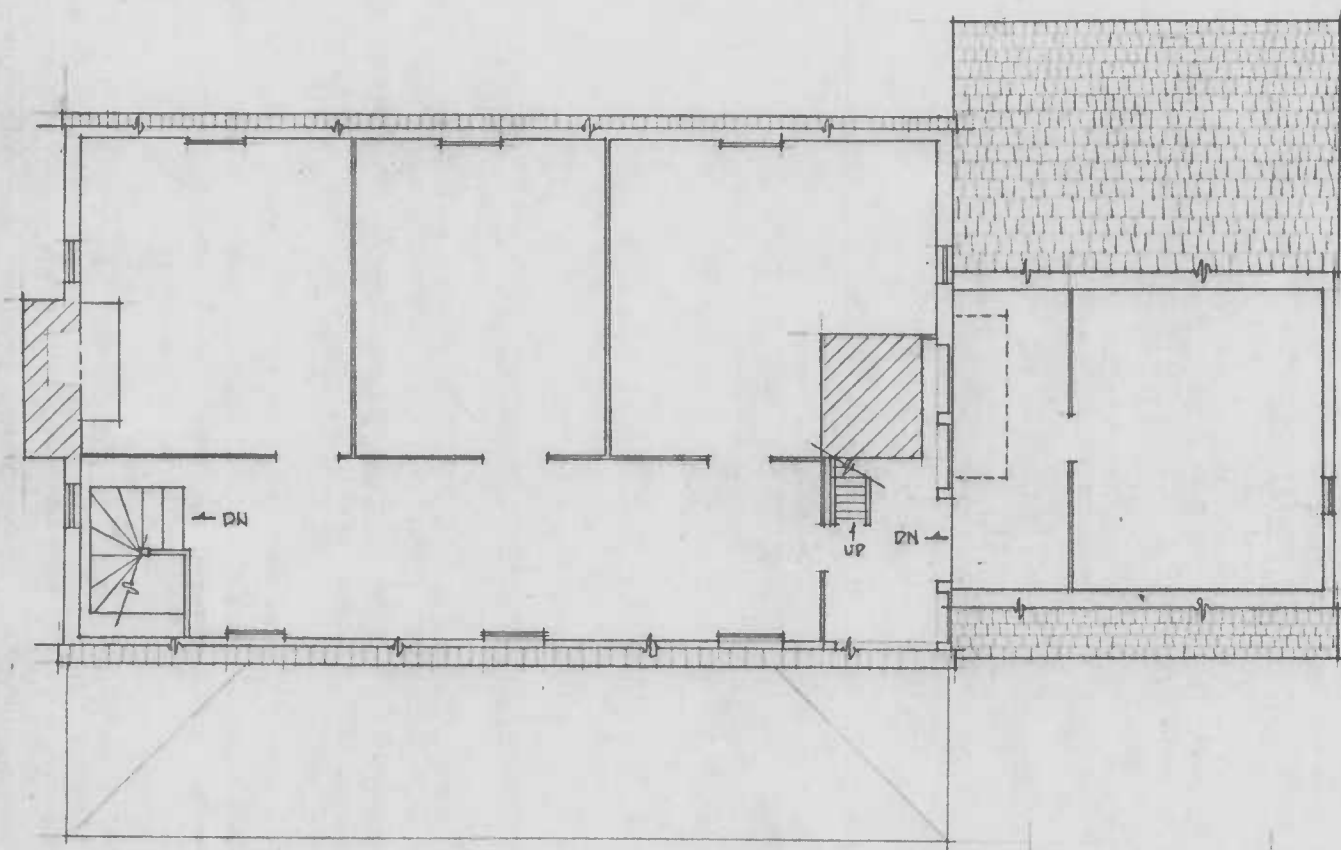
M:23-26

OAKS II

LAYTONSVILLE, MD.

Clayville or
Laytonville

du...



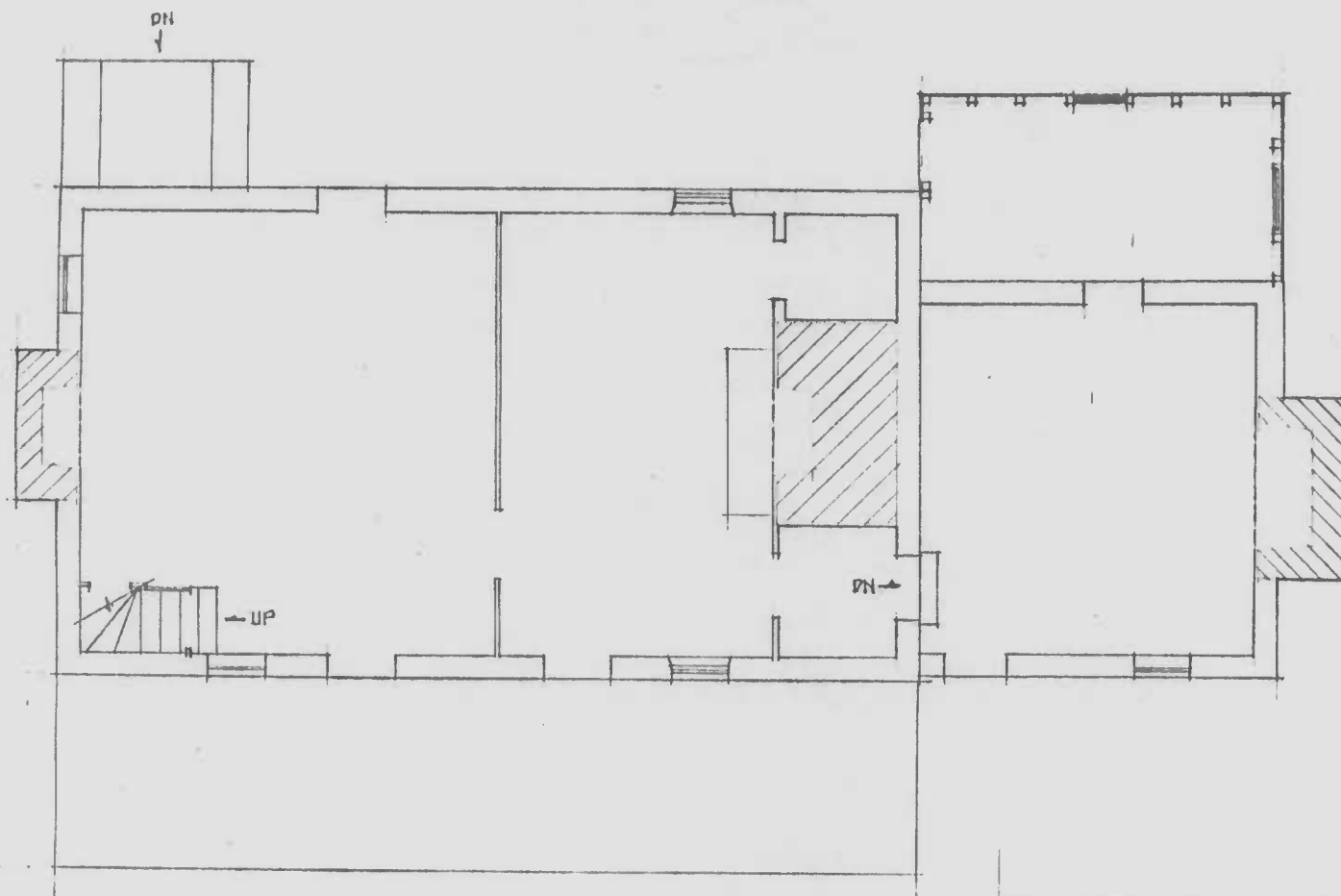
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

ORLANDO RIDOUT V

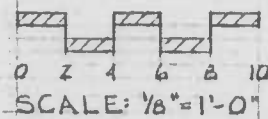
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN



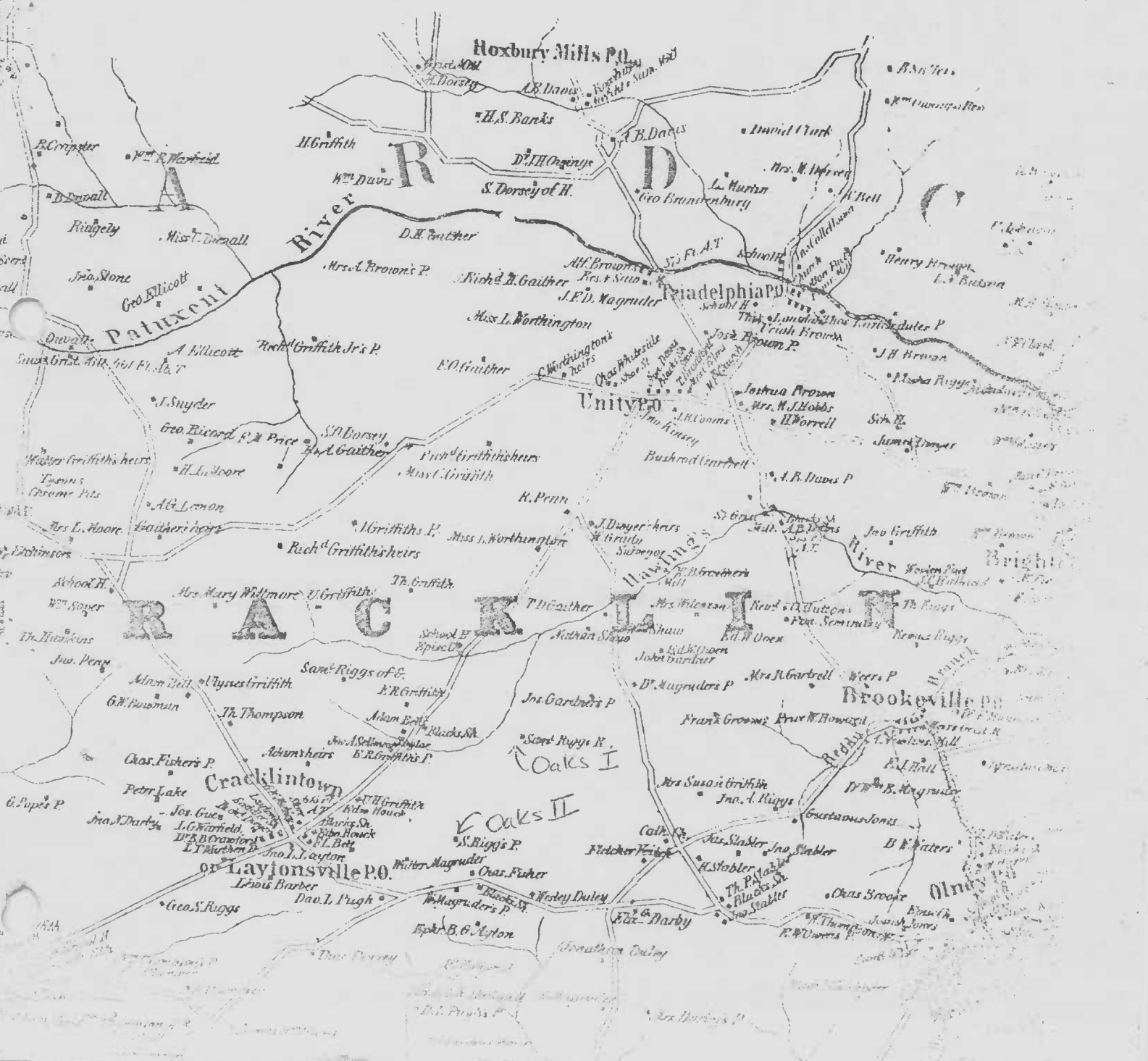
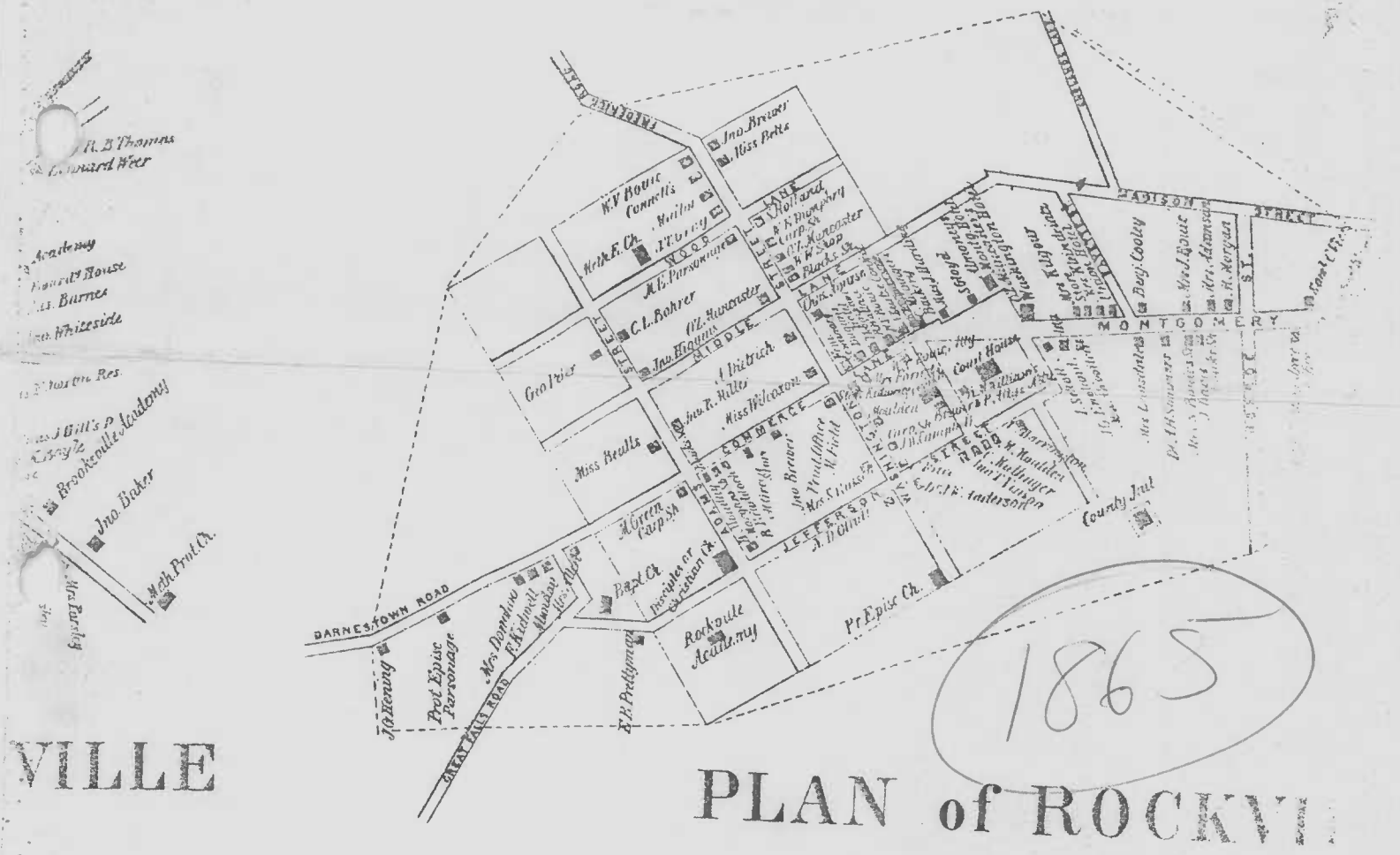
ORLANDO RIDOUT V

M:23-26

OAKS II

LAYTONSVILLE, MD.

The Oaks II





U.S.G.S. Map
Sandy Spring, Md.; Revised 1971
Scale: 1:24000



PROPOSED
PRIME SANITARY LANDFILL SITE
S-55B

M:23-26

[Click here for a plain text ADA compliant screen.](#)

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Real Property Data Search

[Go Back](#)
[View Map](#)
[New Search](#)

Account Identifier: District - 01 Account Number - 02326577

Owner Information

Owner Name: HANDLER, HENRY M & A K
Use: RESIDENTIAL
Principal Residence: YES
Mailing Address: 5815 RIGGS RD
 LAYTONSVILLE MD 20882
Deed Reference: 1) / 6195/ 514
 2)

Location & Structure Information

Premises Address 5815 RIGGS RD
 GAITHERSBURG 20882
Zoning RDT
Legal Description ADD TO BROOKE GROVE

Map	Grid	Parcel	Sub District	Subdivision	Section	Block	Lot	Group	Plat No:
GV61		P911		1				82	Plat Ref:
Special Tax Areas			Town Ad Valorem Tax Class	42					
Primary Structure Built			Enclosed Area		Property Land Area			County Use	
1924			2,180 SF		5.47 AC			111	
Stories		Basement		Type				Exterior	
2		YES		STANDARD UNIT				FRAME	

Value Information

	Base Value	Value As Of	Phase-in Assessments	
		01/01/2003	As Of	As Of
			07/01/2003	07/01/2004
Land:	90,120	124,120		
Improvements:	143,430	164,000		
Total:	233,550	288,120	251,740	269,930
Preferential Land:	0	0	0	0

Transfer Information

Seller:
Type: IMPROVED ARMS-LENGTH
Date: 09/28/1983
Deed1: / 6195/ 514
Price: \$43,000
Deed2:
Seller:
Type:
Date:
Deed1:
Price:
Deed2:
Seller:
Type:
Date:
Deed1:
Price:
Deed2:

Exemption Information

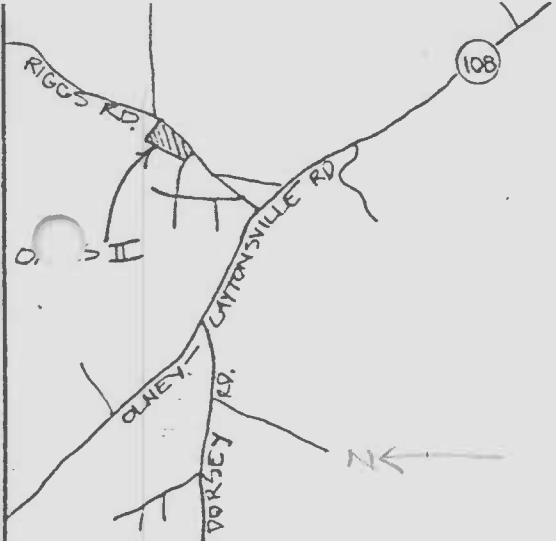
Partial Exempt Assessments	Class	07/01/2003	07/01/2004
County	000	0	0
State	000	0	0
Municipal	000	0	0

Tax Exempt: NO
Exempt Class:

Special Tax Recapture:

* NONE *

M:23-26



LOCATION MAP



OAKS II
RIGGS RD.
LAYTONVILLE

SITE PLAN, LOCATION MAP
SCALE: 1" = 100'

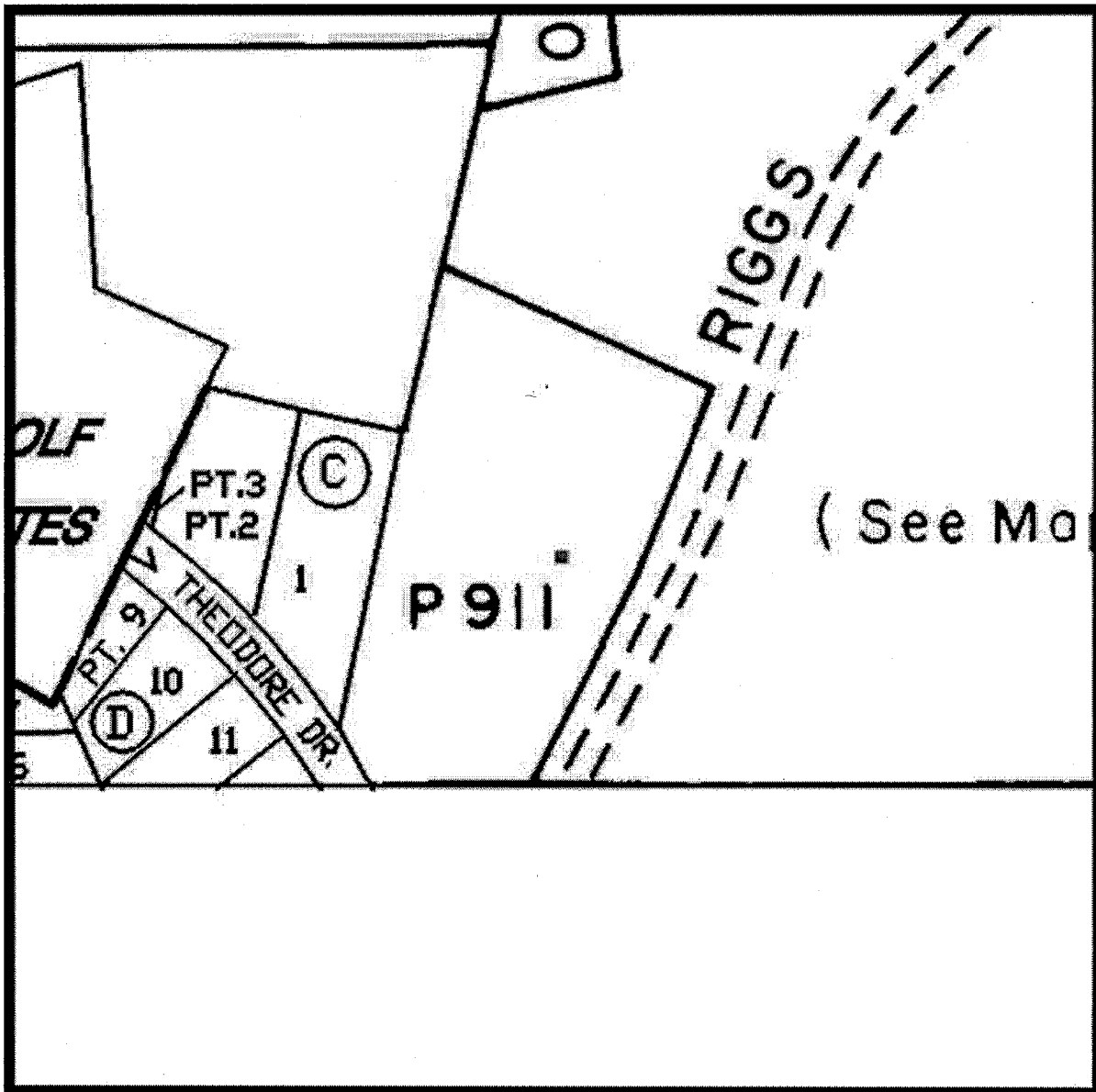




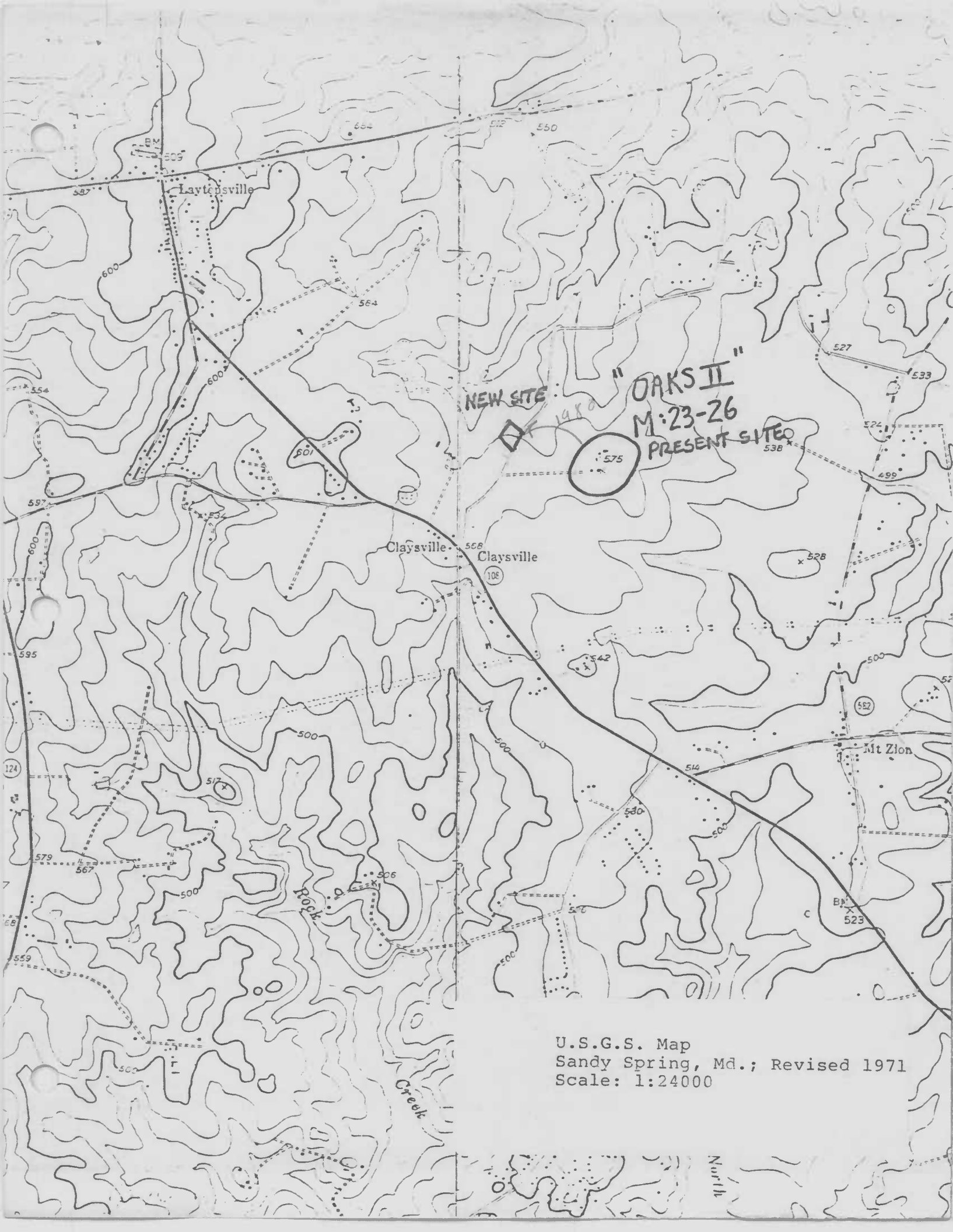
Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
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District - 01 Account Number - 02326577

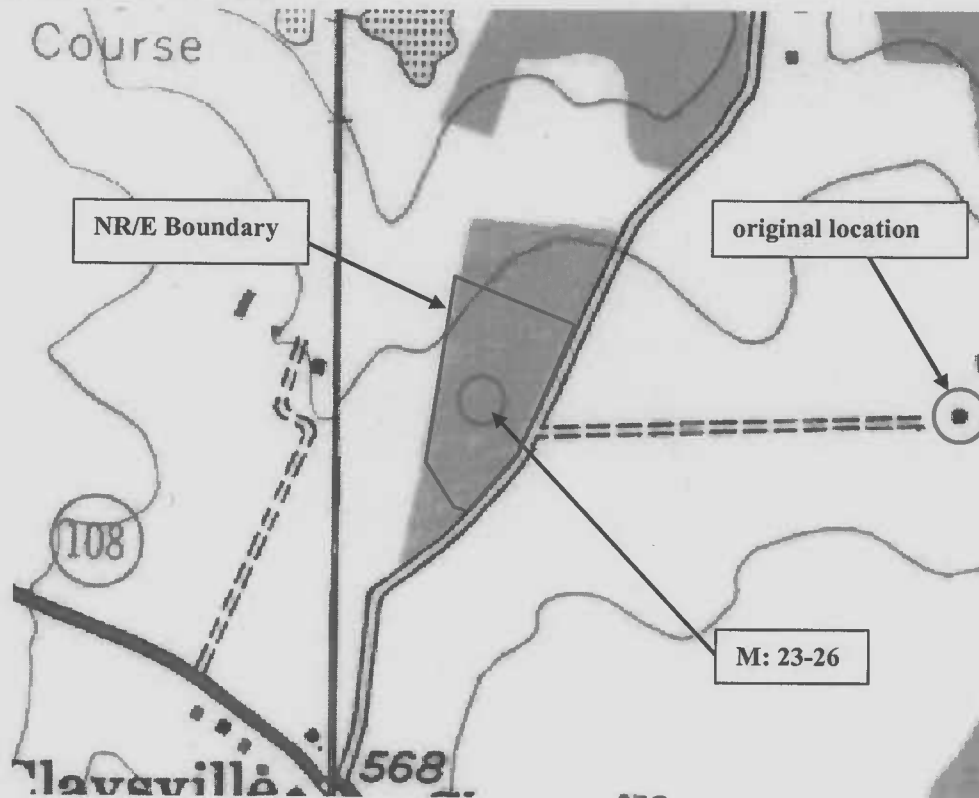


Property maps provided courtesy of the Maryland Department of Planning ©2001.
For more information on electronic mapping applications, visit the Maryland Department of Planning
web site at www.mdp.state.md.us/webcom/index.html



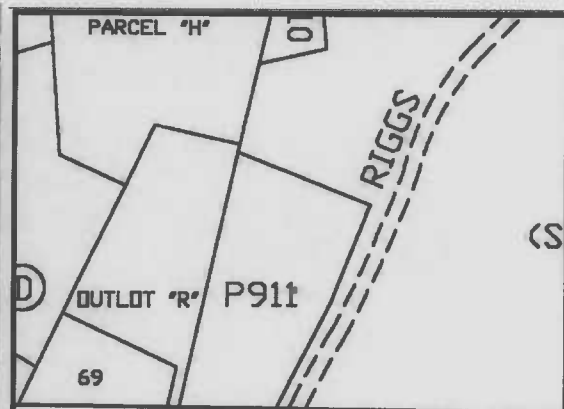
U.S.G.S. Map
Sandy Spring, Md.; Revised 1971
Scale: 1:24000

M: 23-26
The Oaks II (Riggs Farm) (moved 1980)
5815 Riggs Road, Laytonsville
Sandy Spring Quadrangle



1993-94 Aerial Photo

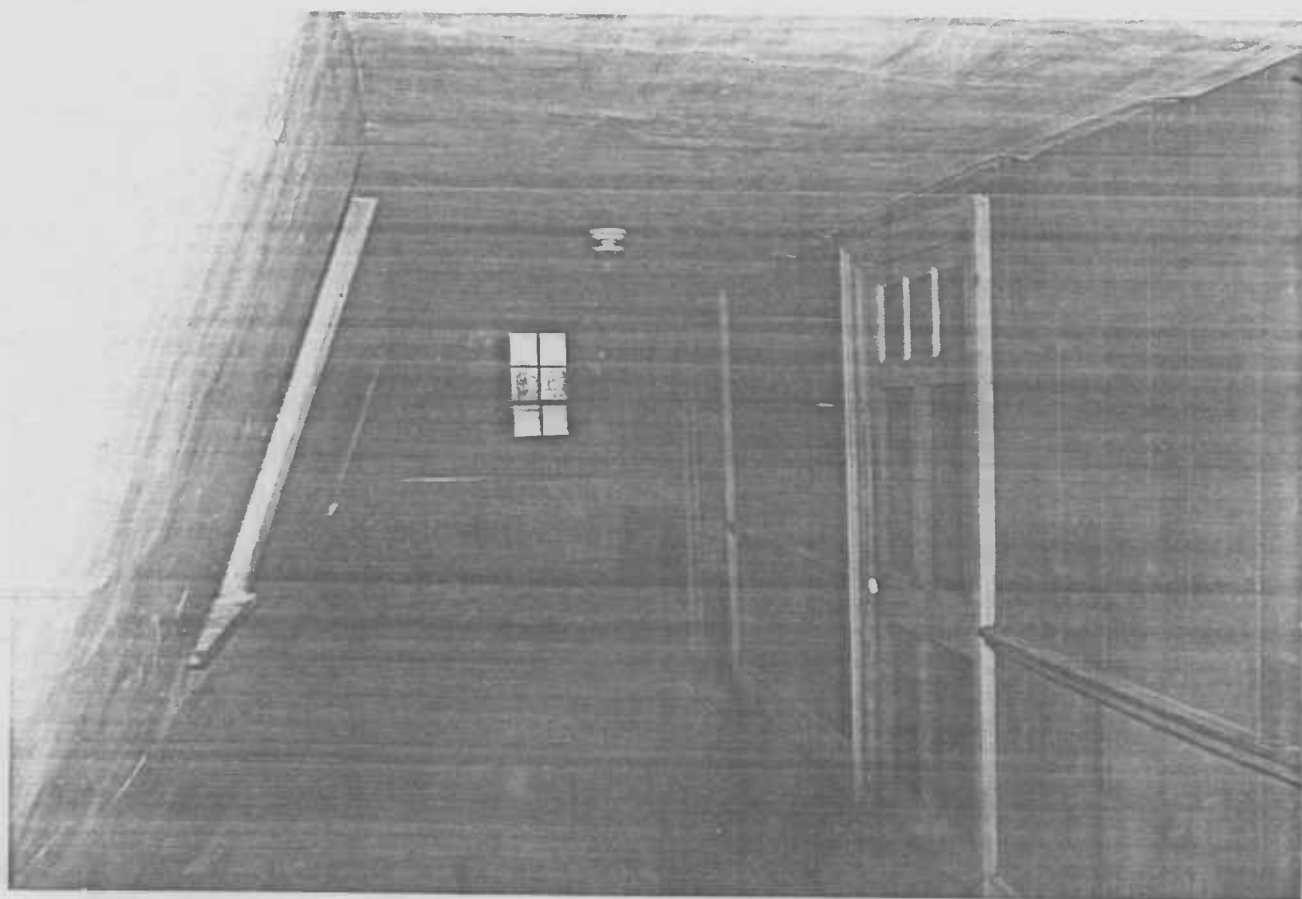
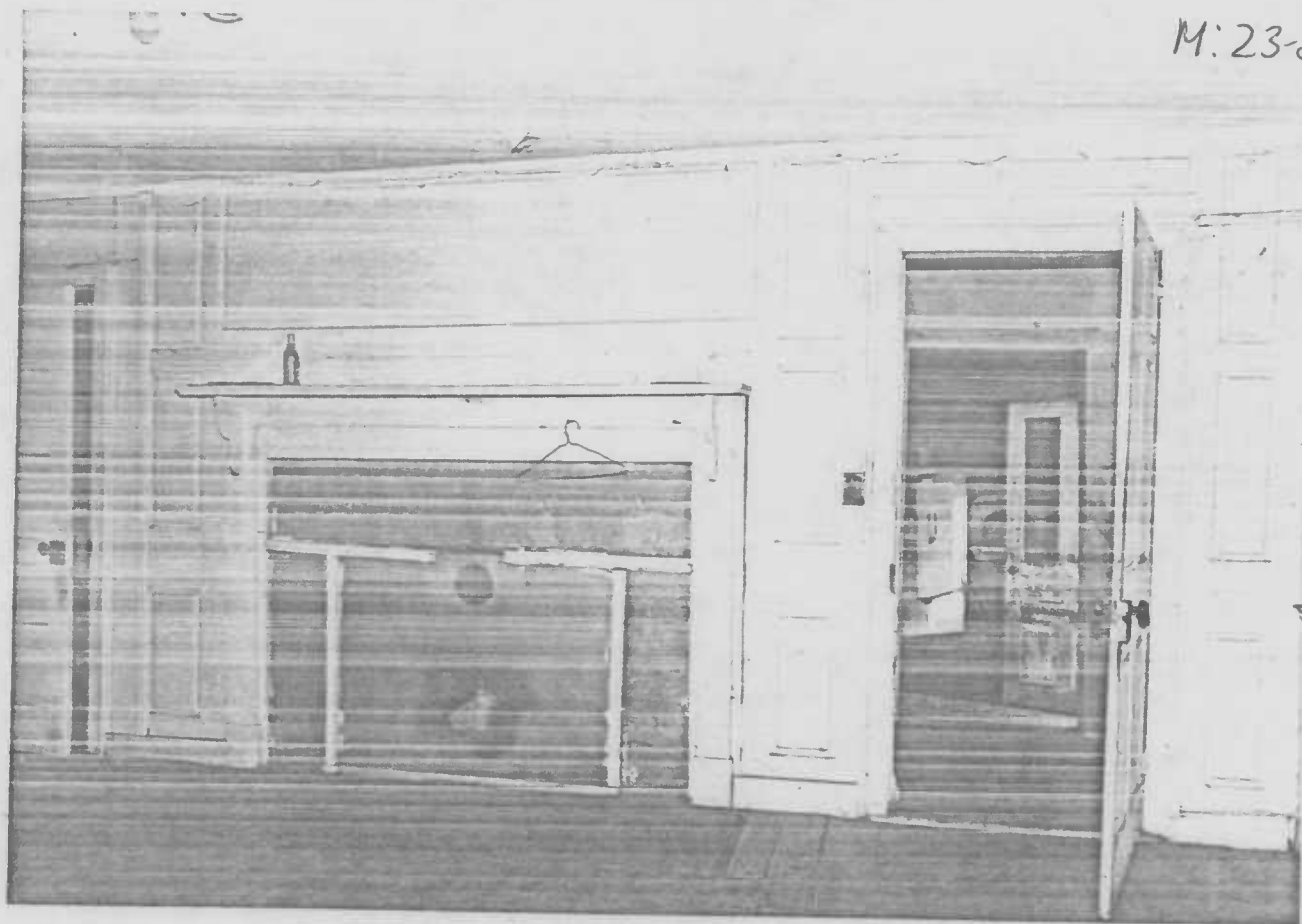
Tax Map GV61



M:23-26



M:23-26





M: 23-26 OAKS II

House circa 1930. Photograph from George Bell Collection, original housed with Michael Dwyer, Maryland National Capital Parks and Planning Commission.



M:23-26

The Oaks II

5815 Riggs Road, Laytonville

Jennifer K. Cosham

March 7, 2004

Digital color photo on file at MHT



M:23-26
The Oaks II
5815 Riggs Road, Laytonsville

Jennifer K. Cosham
March 7, 2004
Digital color photo on file at MHT



M:23-26
The Oaks II outbuildings
5815 Riggs Road, Laytonville

Jennifer K. Cosham

March 7, 2004

Digital color photo on file at MHT



M:23-76

the OAKS II barn

5815 Riggs Road, Laytonsv. 712

Jennifer K. Cosham

March 7, 2004

Digital color photo on file at MHT

The Oaks II (Riggs House)



Front view of Oaks II - August 1978



Austin Geisbert and rear of Oaks II - August 1978



Cellar entrance - August 1978



Chimney on west side - August 1978



East side of Oaks II showing
added on lean-to - August 1978



East side of Oaks II showing
old chimney in kitchen - August 1978



OAKS II

M: 23-26

house circa 1930

(from George Bell Collection,
original housed with Michael
Dwyer, MNPPC)



Michael F. Dwyer
M.N.C.P.P.C.
Park Historian



Michael F. Dwyer
M.N.C.P.P.C.
Park Historian

NAME *THE OAKS (RIGGS HOUSE)*

LOCATION *Rt. 108 + RIGGS Rd, LAYTONSVILLE, Md*

FACADE *SW*

PHOTO TAKEN *3/8/79*

M:23-26



Old wind driven water pump
August 1978



Water pump on property
August 1978



Rear entrance to kitchen
August 1978



S. Riggs scratched on window
with diamond ring in 1885 is
faintly visible - August 1978



M: 23-26 OAKS II

Laytonsville, Montgomery County, Md.

Ellen Coxe January, 1980

Negative located at Md. Historical Trust

Board and batten smokehouse